

5<sup>c.</sup>

ILLUSTRATED SHORT STORIES.

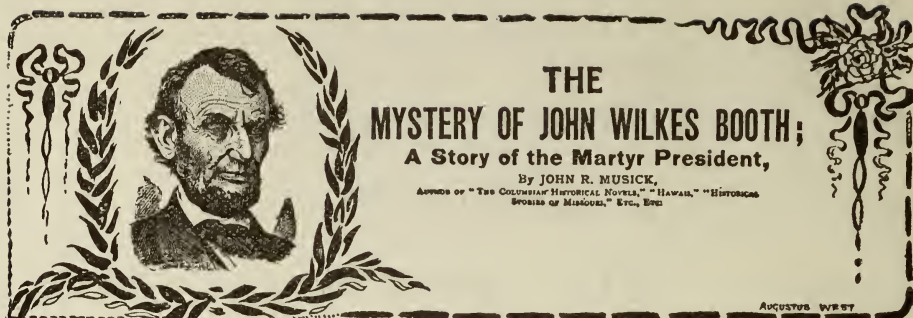
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### SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING CHAPTERS

A soldier of the Confederate army, of Corsican birth, crosses the Northern lines to see his dying child. After the death of the child, he is suddenly captured and taken to Port Tobacco, where he is tried and sentenced to be hanged as a spy. A mysterious woman, who seems to have a hypnotic power over men, makes a futile trip to Washington, to intercede for the man's pardon. After several unsuccessful attempts to see the President, she receives a telegram telling of the man's execution. On hearing this she visits the graves of the man, his two children, who have died, and his wife, who committed suicide at the hour of his execution, where she takes an oath of vengeance, and vows that a single hand shall strike a blow that will make the accursed North weep. Capt. Claude Mitchell, of an Ohio regiment, is captured and saved from death by Geo. Odell, a young Confederate officer. The two become fast friends, and afterwards meet in the city of Louisville, making the acquaintance of John Wilkes Booth and a mysterious woman playing in his company, who seems to have a hypnotic power over men.

### CHAPTER VII.

#### The Evacuation.

It was Sunday, the second day of April, 1865. General Lee's lines had been broken below Petersburg, and the army was in full retreat. A strange agitation was that day perceptible on the streets of the Confederate capital, which for four long years had been protected by that marvel in generalship, Robert E. Lee. Whispers of evacuation and surrender were already going from lip to lip.

The tremor of agitation in the city was nothing compared to the despair, hopes and fears of the army. Captain George Odell had been wounded in the conflict at Five Forks and lay with several others in a wagon that was going to Richmond, the Confederate capital, which having for four years defied the overwhelming resources of the North, was thought impregnable.

The way was open, and the whole army seemed marching on Richmond. Oh how they longed for rest, shelter and wholesome food, especially the poor wounded.

"Richmond! Richmond!" Far and

faint in the van rose the cry, and rolled and swelled, as, caught up and re-echoed by each advancing regiment, until it reached the long convoy of agony and death, where Captain Odell and thousands of others lay, and repeated by fainting voices, amid groans and dying gasps, which sounded to the ears of the wounded officer like a wail of defeat.

"Richmond! Richmond!" The cry roused him; he rose on his elbow and peered out through a rent in the canvas which sheltered them from the wind, sun and rain, but saw nothing except the long line of mud-stained wagons, rumbling along the deep-rutted road; and to their left, plodding slowly on through the mire, haggard, pale, and bending under the weight of their arms, a battalion of infantry.

Richmond, the goal of all their hopes through dreary years of harrassing marches and carnage on the bloody fields, was before them. Richmond, the golden city of many a poor Confederate's dreams, where was to be builded a new republic more perfect than the old one, the city where they might recruit their fast failing strength

free from the harrassing Colossus of the North, was at last in danger.

"Richmond! Richmond!"

Yet these were not the glorious shouts which some two years before resounded on the banks of the Rappahannock. Then all was hope, fresh, gushing, youthful enthusiasm; now from their stern veteran bands arose an immense cry of despair, doubt and trembling fear. Richmond, the pride and glory of the Confederacy, now to the sick and wounded offered food and shelter from the pitiless rain and leaden hail. Each man felt it, and unconsciously, in the very tones of his voice, echoed his belief to others near.

Each man pressed on; the drivers lashed their jaded horses and mules, causing the rough, springless wagons to rock and plunge along the uneven road, and shrieks of acute agony to break from the lips of many a wretched sufferer; yet even from their midst the cry still rose:

"Richmond! Forward, forward!"

The long trains and struggling troops, on their way to the Confederate capital, little dreamed that Lee had sent a message to President Davis that his lines were broken, that he was in retreat, and the city must be evacuated. Not one of those plodding infantrymen, teamsters or wounded, doubted General Lee's ability or inclination to defend the capital. Their advance was through a country in which there was every evidence of ruin and death—cities, villages, country mansions, and even some of the humblest huts showed the ravages of war. Many buildings had been burned to the ground, leaving only the lonely chimneys as blackened monuments to vandalism. But Richmond, the very heart and seat of the national existence of the Confederacy, had been spared as the one green oasis in the desert of ruin which spread over the South.

Anon, to eager queries, came the answer, flying from rank to rank:

"'Tis there! 'tis there! We're home once more!" Safe from the storms of war and merciless persecutions of a

cruel foe! On rumbled the heavy wagons, and on, on with renewed strength tramped the exhausted soldiers. Every eye was strained to catch the first glimpse of the longed for city; every ear on the alert for the first shout of welcome that was to go up from the place sacred to those who had defended it but had not seen it for years.

At last, from the top of a hill George Odell, looking from the side of the wagon, caught the first glimpse of the capital of the Southern Confederacy. There lay Richmond, with her wilderness of roofs and chimneys, her gilt cupolas, her metal tops glittering in the bright sunlight, and her hundreds of tall church spires pointing up at the skies. He little dreamed that in one of those churches that very morning the president of the Southern Confederacy had received the alarming intelligence of the death blow to the cause for which he suffered.

"On, on! Richmond! Richmond!" Loud broke the cry from every breast, and rays of hope glimmered on many a dying face. "Richmond! Richmond!"

It was six o'clock in the evening when the convoy with the wounded entered the city; it was almost dark; the streets swarmed with an excited mob, but to the confused and weakened senses of George Odell was revealed none of the strange gloom of an abandoned city. Oh, what relief to behold houses once more, and lights and glowing fires, shining through open doors and windows, for those early April days were not without their chilling winds, cold rains and gusts of snow. They stopped at the door of a handsome house, and George and the others were soon lifted out. They took him up a flight of stairs, into a room, and laid him on a bed. Never will he forget the infinite relief, the inexpressible comfort, as it sank, soft and smooth, beneath his aching limbs. The room was large, and as the light from the great chandelier fell on the rich silk hangings, and shone on the grand

polished furniture, it looked like a palace.

"Rather better than the wagons, this; eh, comrade?" said an old gray-bearded sergeant, who had helped to place him on the bed, and lingered tenderly at his side, gazing on him with the anxious fondness of a parent for a sick child. "I've gone through many a bloody field and done pretty much like the rest, I trust; but to escort that train of wounded as I have had to do for two days, and hear the poor fellows groan at every jolt—heavens! I'd rather be wounded myself!"

Soon another poor fellow, with a bad bayonet wound in his ribs, was laid by the young captain's side, and three more, all severely wounded, were disposed of on temporary beds around the room. George's neighbor belonged to his own corps, and what was more, was from his own city, Charleston, so they soon became friends; and as their spirits began to revive, their tongues began to wag, until the orderly in charge interposed with instructions that they must keep quiet, as some of the wounded were very low. An hour passed, and George, who knew his sister Bessie was in Richmond, began to ask himself how he could get intelligence to her of his presence. Gradually the fictitious strength which excitement and joy had given him began to fail; fever came on, and he lay in a kind of half sleep, sometimes a momentary prey to some horrible nightmare, then arousing with a start and trying to retain consciousness by listening to the ceaseless roll of heavy vehicles on the street. One of the wounded who lay on his right rose with a sudden start, struggled to catch his gasping breath, and fell heavily back on his couch. The guard hastened to his side and spoke to him, but he made no answer. He took a glass from the table and poured some of its contents down the dying man's throat. There was a momentary struggle, a gurgling groan, a gasp for breath, a sudden quiver and stiffening of the limbs, and all was still. George raised himself on his elbow and asked:

"Is he gone?"

The guard, who was kneeling at the poor fellow's side, with his hand over his heart, looked around, nodded his head, and said:

"Poor Rivers! He was so anxious to get here, for his parents live in this town. He will never see them—he is gone!"

A few minutes later and the surgeon came in. The orderly pointed to the dead man and whispered a few words to him. They approached the body, and the surgeon quickly removed the bandage from the wounds.

"Too late!" he murmured, "too late! Oh, that there were more of us! Now quick for the living!"

He went to George's bedside, and when the light borne by one of his assistants fell on his face, the wounded officer was startled to see how pale it was.

He half sat, half fell on the side of the bed, and caught at the covering for support.

"Doctor, are you ill?" asked the wounded captain.

"No, it's nothing; only a little faint. I forgot to eat to-day. There, give me something to drink and a crust of bread."

He roused himself and began dressing their wounds. That noble man, whose name should be carved on tablets of gold, had touched no food for twenty-four hours, and had not closed his eyes for three nights.

None but poor wretches like George, who for two long days and nights had been jolted in a rough wagon, with insufficient bandages of coarse texture hurriedly applied to his wounds, and soiled with supuration and clotted blood, could appreciate the feeling of comfort and relief as the offensive, heated mass was removed, and cool, healing balm applied. Then the fever-cooling draught which stilled his rushing blood, the soft bed, the subdued light. Oh, what relief! No wonder he slept and knew so little of the stirring events going on about him.

That Sabbath day which had dawned

so peaceful and calm on Richmond was destined to close in horror and red-eyed despair. First came the news that Lee's lines were broken at Petersburg, that he was in full retreat on Danville; the troops covering the city at Chaffins and Dewey's Bluffs were about to be withdrawn, and the city to be immediately abandoned. The live-long day trains came and went, and wagons, carriages and artillery rumbled over the streets, while horsemen dashed to and fro.

Toward evening groups of ruffians, poorly clad and half starved, more or less under the influence of liquor, began to parade the streets, and as night approached pillage, robbery and rioting became the order of the hour, until the police and a few soldiers scattered them.

An effort was made to organize the Local Brigade to aid Ewel's corps in defending the city, but the effort was a failure. Desertions were so continuous that at daylight less than two hundred remained. Just before dawn the Confederate General Ewell rode to the headquarters of the provost marshal. He met General Sulivane and informed him that General G. W. C. Lee was then crossing the pontoons at Drewy's, that he would destroy it and press on to join the main army. He said all the bridges crossing the river near the ill-fated capital had been destroyed except Mayo's, and that the wagon bridge over the canal in front of Mayo's had already been burned by the Union emissaries. General Sulivane was to hasten with his command to Mayo's bridge and protect it; also the one remaining foot-bridge over the canal leading to it, until General Gary, of South Carolina, should arrive. In fifteen minutes Sulivane was at Mayo's bridge, and formed his men to protect it to the last extremity.

By this time Richmond was one of the most imposing spectacles since the burning of Rome. Incendiaries, or fragments of bombs had fired various buildings both in Richmond and Manchester, until the cities, though sur-

rounded by darkness, were like a blaze of day. Three high arched bridges were in flames; beneath them the dark rolling waters reflected the lurid splendor of the skies. Ever and anon, as a magazine exploded, a column of white smoke rose up farther than the eye could reach, followed by a dull roar which seemed to make the earth rock and tremble, and immediately afterward hundreds of shells exploded in the air, sending their iron spray far below the bridge. As the immense magazines of cartridges were ignited the rattle of thousands of muskets followed, and then all was still for a moment except the dull roar of the ocean of flame.

At dawn terrific explosions near "The Rockets" were heard, which proved to be the destruction of the unfinished gunboats.

By daylight a mob consisting of thousands of men, women and children gathered about the commissary depot in front of the bridge. Richmond at this time was a starving city, and the Confederate Government had removed its guards, and Congress had fled, the president was gone, and there was no restraining hand on the hungry populace. Doors of the government warehouses were broken down, and a wild struggle of famished demons commenced. Barrels of bacon, flour, sugar, coffee and liquors were burst open. "The gutters ran whiskey," says one historian, "and it was lapped as it flowed down the streets, while all fought for a share of the plunder." Meanwhile the flames rolled nearer and nearer, until the commissary building itself was on fire.

Dawn of day showed long lines of blue coats approaching the deserted city, and a little later came the clatter of hoofs and roar of wheels dashing up Maine street. Sulivane had withdrawn his pickets from across the canal; but held his infantry under arms, waiting with anxiously beating heart the approach of General Gary. When the pickets were drawn from across the

canal an engineer officer applied the torch to the bridge.

Barrels of tar surrounded by pine knots had been placed at intervals on the remaining bridges, with kerosene at hand, and a lieutenant of engineers stood ready to fire the mass at the word of command. The noisy train coming down Main street proved to be Gary's ambulances, sent forward preparatory for the final rush over the only remaining bridge. The muleteers galloped their animals about half way down the descent, when they were stopped by the dense mass of humanity. Officers dashed forward into the mob and cleared a lane. Then the ambulances were galloped down to the bridge, Sulivane returned to his post, and the mob resumed its struggles for plunder. A few moments later a long line of Confederate cavalry came thundering through the city and dashed down to the river. Gary had come. The mob were scattered right and left by the sabres of the horsemen, and the cavalry thundered over. The last was a single company which rode headlong to the bridge. General Gary, the gallant South Carolinian, who had been waiting to see the last one of his brave soldiers safe, saluted Sulivane, and cried:

"My rear guard! All over; good bye! Blow her to h—l!" and trotted away over the hill. Next moment another blaze, and with this explosion Richmond, the Confederate capital, was left to the mob.

During that terrible night George lay in a half dreaming, half waking state, wondering if Bessie was in the city, and if she would come to him next morning. At two A. M. the guard was changed, and one of the men went out to learn the cause of the uproar, and a Georgian took his place. A few moments later a friend came to bear him company, and both sat down by the table, near the light, and conversed in low tones. The change half roused George from his sleep, and he lay for a long while in a state of partial consciousness, catching now and

then some fragments of their talk. He learned that Mr. Davis and the Confederate Congress had left the city and that only a few troops remained to look after the wounded and baggage trains; that Lee was in full retreat, but they hoped it was only to draw Sheridan into a trap. He would probably be caught between the armies of Lee and Johnson and destroyed. Some straggling troops were still pouring into the city—more and more indistinct came their words, until at last he again fell into a sound sleep, and dreamed of his once happy home as it was before the war. His dear mother and father lived again, and Bessie was once more the little pet of the family. Then again the scene changed, and he was on the bloody field of Five Points, amid dead and dying, and crashing shells and groans and shrieks and maddening shouts sounding on every side, while high above all came the deafening roar of artillery. A hand was laid on his arm and a voice called him by name. He awoke with a start. The rattling sound of musketry seemed to still ring in his ears; he still heard shouts.

"What is it?" cried George. "Who is there?"

His companion, who was in a half sitting posture, whispered:

"Hush! We are attacked!"

True enough; there it was again, the distant, irregular rattling of small arms, then confused cries, then hurried, running steps in the street.

"To arms!" shouted George, trying to spring from the bed; but an excruciating pain brought him down and restored him to fuller consciousness. "What is it? Where is the guard?" he asked, gazing around the empty room.

"I don't know. The noise awoke me. It can scarcely be a regular attack; I hear no artillery—there it is! Do you hear it?" There was an explosion, as of an ammunition wagon, or a mine, followed by nearer and louder cries, among which George first descried the words:

"Fire! Fire!"

In a moment both were out of bed, and forgetting their wounds in their intense excitement, found their way to the window. George threw it open, looked out and listened. It was hardly daylight, but the dark clouds retarded the dawn. Far off to the west, above the tall, steep gables of the houses opposite, there was a dull, blood-red glimmer on the dark clouds, and among the confused and distant uproar they plainly caught the words:

"Fire! Fire!"

"There is something wrong," said George's companion. "Let us awake the others," and he turned toward the two men, who, much more severely wounded than they, and exhausted by loss of blood, were still buried in sleep.

"No! no!" interposed George, stopping him; "let them sleep while they may; who knows—" There was another loud explosion in the distance, then an immense column of flames and smoke and blazing timber, and countless sparks, shot up into the very skies, as from the crater of a volcano, and spread and rolled, lighting up the whole western horizon. It seemed seas of flood, with heavy, rugged clouds rolling in fantastic folds, now dark, now tinged with lurid glare, now steeped in sheets of flame. Spellbound, they stood, gazing from the window. They heard loud shouts and the clatter of running feet in the street below. George leaned out and saw several men rushing past, and the only answer to his call was the frantically repeated cry:

"Fire! Fire!"

North, south, west, wherever the eye could reach, lighting up the roofs and spires, and clouds, and skies, rising, whirling, glancing, reflected thousands and thousands of times upon glass and metal, were the raging flames. George drew back appalled; the terrible truth rushed through his mind. "Great Heaven, they are burning the city!" The quarter where they were was still comparatively quiet, all those able to move having rushed long before to the

great bridge over which General Sullivane still stood guard. George saw a few haggard faces looking from the windows, and heard groans and cries for help.

"Come!" the captain cried. "Come, if we would not be roasted alive, let us go!"

"And these?" said his companion, pointing toward the still sleeping soldiers.

"We must find help!"

"Leave them here alone?" George's companion seemed to hesitate.

"It's their only chance!"

"Yes; you are right. Let us go!"

Then from the house opposite rose the shrill and despairing cry:

"Help! Help! Fire! Fire!" George rushed to the window. The lower stories were in a blaze, the raging flames pouring amidst thick columns of smoke through doors and windows and springing up in long, sharp, forked tongues over the wooden structure, while the inmates rushed from window to window in the upper stories, uttering dreadful cries.

He saw two figures spring from the midst of the smoke which poured from the low cellar door, and almost immediately a musket was fired from a window above, and one fell, while the other ran on and vanished in the gloom and smoke. It was the thing of a moment.

"Come!" cried George, turning to the door. "Come!"

His companion shook his head. "Go, you, and try to send help; it is too near to leave now. I'll stay."

"But you are mad! Who knows but this very house may be a mine? Come!"

The soldier cast a look upon George which, at all other times, would have made his blood boil; it was half reproach and half contempt; then calmly laying his hand on his wounded limb, said:

"I doubt if I could run if I tried; but they will not go to our Father above and say that John Lackland saved himself and abandoned his brothers. I stay!"

"Amen!" ejaculated George, and returned to the window. He remained there spellbound, gazing on the house opposite, now a wild, raging mass of whirling flames. Then he heard the distant rumbling of wheels. It was Gary's ambulances coming at last. A couple of cavalymen clattered down the street, striking at the doors with their swords, and shouting:

"Bring down the wounded! Here come the ambulances!"

"Now for it," said Lackland. "Come!"

They awakened the two wounded men and told them a part of the truth. Happily they were too low to know or feel much. With excruciating pain to all, they half bore and half dragged them to the foot of the stairs.

"Are they coming?" asked Lackland.

George went to the door and looked out. Yes, there they were, stopping at each door to take in the wounded, and hurrying on. The first ambulance rushed by, piled to the very top with its writhing, groaning freight. On came the second. It stopped two doors below, and there were more men pitched on the top of the struggling human heap.

"Here! Here!" cried George at the top of his voice.

"Full!" roared the driver, lashing his horses. They would have dashed on to avoid the dreadful heat of the burning house opposite, which seemed on the point of falling, had not George sprang to the leaders' heads and clung to their bridles, shouting:

"No! No! In Heaven's name take us in!"

"Clear the way! Make way!"

"No! No!" And with the madness of despair he still clung to the heads of the horses, which, scorched by the heat, and frightened by the flames and falling timber, plunged and reared as if they would dash the wagon to pieces, while the wretched wounded shrank with shrieks from the heat of the devouring flames. Oh what a scene! Those horses, those men, struggling as so

many fiends, the whole lit up by the glare of hell.

"Where are they?" a voice at last cried.

"Here!" shouted Lackland.

Two men jumped down and ran into the house. A moment more and their two unfortunate comrades were put in the wagon. Lackland climbed in, but George, overcome, fell as the vehicle rolled on. He was unnoticed.

A wild shriek, and a female, rushing down the scorched street, stooped over him. She recognized him, and cried:

"George! George! My brother, oh my brother!" He made no answer, and she dragged him back up the street, while the heat blistered her hands and pretty face.

Her strength was giving out, and he was not yet free from danger. Her vision grew dim, and the smoke and hot breath of the raging flames was still on her face.

"I can go no further! Oh, brother! brother! we will die together!"

At this moment the thunder of hoofs could have been heard on the street. A single horseman sped like a cannon-shot through the smoke. He wore a blue coat and was close after the flying Confederates. He saw the struggling girl, was at her side in a moment, and leaping from his horse, cried:

"In God's name let me help you!"

"Claude! Claude!" shrieked Bessie, and fell fainting in her lover's arms.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Surrender.

In those last trying days of the war of the rebellion, events seemed to rush on the heels of events so that even the clearest-headed historian can hardly gather them up in chronological order. It was not good or bad generalship in that struggle that won or lost. It was fate. Courage amounted to little, if anything. Men fought and lost as brave as those who fought and won. General Lee, with his army reduced to



about thirty-five thousand, had made some of the noblest stands at Five Forks, Hatcher's Run, and other places ever known. But it seemed that for every northern soldier that fell there sprang up a dozen. Already more of their enemy had fallen in a single campaign than Lee could ever muster. With only thirty-five thousand unpaid, half-starved, illy-clad, poorly-armed and equipped men Lee was retreating from an army of more than one hundred thousand, and rapidly increasing in numbers. He knew that fully a million could be massed against him. The Union soldiers were well-clothed, well-fed and well-paid, while his poor handful of brave veterans were ragged, starving and despised.

The hounds were chasing the fox; he was almost run to earth, and every recruit possible to obtain had been rushed to the front. Captain Claude Mitchell had only time to see that Bes-sie and her wounded brother were in comfortable quarters, when at the head of his command he hurried to join Grant, who was still pressing the shattered army of Lee, determined to run them to the earth.

The Union troops on entering Richmond extinguished the fires and stopped the rioting.

As Claude was leaving the city he suddenly came upon a person standing on the street corner the sight of whom caused him to halt and stare with amazement. It was the mysterious Sybil, the strange support of the great actor from whom he had parted but a few weeks before at Memphis.

She was so statue-like, so imposing, that his horse stopped of its own accord.

"I beg pardon, but is not this the lady who supported Booth at Louisville?" Claude asked. She gave him a keen look, and answered:

"I am, sir."

"Were you here before the evacuation?"

"No, sir." Her answers were short and cold, and her eyes fixed on the

ruins of the great bridge that had spanned the river.

"I regret I cannot remain to go to the theater if you are to play!"

Pointing to the smouldering ruins, she asked:

"Is this a time for amusement and plays? Look on these ruins and tell me who can dream of amusement." Her rebuke was so severe that Claude rode on. She gave him a glance of fire and hissed low through her teeth:

"So he goes to be in at the death when the poor hares are run to earth." There was a loud rejoicing and shouting at one part of the city, and she went to see what caused the commotion. It was a procession headed by President Lincoln leaving the city. A mob of happy negroes were gathered about the carriage in which the president rode, offering up their oblations in ways grotesque and amusing.

With her lips tightly compressed and all the bitterness of a soul filled with hate, she turned away and walked to another part of the city.

During the forenoon of April 7, 1865, Captain Claude Mitchell joined General Grant and staff and with them rode into the little village of Farmville. General Grant drew up in front of the village hotel, dismounted, and established headquarters on its broad piazza. The officers were tired and in need of rest. Someone brought a report that General FitzHugh Lee was fighting Crook and pressing him closely on the north side of the river. Grant directed that Crook be given reinforcements enough to sweep Fitz Lee's forces off the earth.

Captain Mitchell was with General Grant in the hotel when Generals Ord and Gibbon came to visit the commander. These two gentlemen had something of the greatest importance on their minds and wished to unburden themselves.

"I believe, General Grant," said General Ord, "that you ought to send some communication to Lee and stop this bloodshed. I know Dr. Smith, recently captured, and know him to be a sen-

sible and truthful man. He said the cause of the Confederacy was lost when Lee crossed the James River, and he considered it the duty of the authorities to negotiate for peace then, while they still had a right to claim concessions; now he says they are not in a condition to claim anything. He furthermore says that for every man killed after this somebody will be responsible, and it will be but little better than murder."

General Grant sat on the piazza smoking a cigar in silence, but listening to every word that was said. The two officers had been discussing the matter for some minutes when the commander asked if the doctor had any information as to General Lee's mind on the subject.

"He does not know what General Lee will do, but hopes he will surrender his army at once."

Grant was still smoking and thinking the matter over, when a courier came in post haste to the headquarters and gave the general a message from Sheridan. The closest observer could not have told from the face of the general whether the courier brought good or bad news. The message stated that Sheridan had heard that Lee's trains of provisions, which had come by rail, were at Appomattox, and that he expected to capture them before Lee could reach them. The general read it carefully twice, then went into the house and wrote the following communication:

"Headquarters, Armies of the U. S.

"5 P. M., April 7th, 1865.

"General R. E. Lee, Commanding C. S. A.:

"The results of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate States Army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

"U. S. Grant, Lieutenant-General."

General Seth Williams, the adjutant-general, was sent with this communication to the front, where Humphries' corps was close up to the enemy's rear guards, and to have it sent into Lee's lines. Grant then determined to wait at Farmville for Lee's answer to his communication, and Captain Mitchell being on detached duty and away from his command, was invited to remain also. Grant was given the very room in which Lee had slept the night before. Shortly after midnight Claude, who slept on a blanket in the hall near the general's door, was awakened by a messenger coming with Lee's answer. The answer was:

"April 7, 1865.

"General: I have received your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender.

"R. E. Lee, General.

"Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, Commanding Armies of the U. S."

Though the answer was not exactly what General Grant had hoped for, there was enough in it to indicate the condition of Lee's mind on the subject. Between the lines it read that Lee really feared his cause was lost. Next morning before leaving Farmville, Grant sent Williams again to Humphreys' front with the following for Lee:

"April 8th, 1865.

"General R. E. Lee, Commanding C. S. A.

"Your note of last evening, in reply to mine of the same date, asking the conditions on which I will accept the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, is just received. In reply I would say that, peace being my great desire, there is but one condition I would insist upon—namely, that the men and officers surrendered shall be

disqualified from taking up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose, at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia will be received.

"U. S. Grant, Lieutenant-General."

As General Williams galloped away General Grant stood on the piazza lighting his cigar. Claude having become hopelessly separated from his command, and feeling the depest anxiety in the matter about which General Grant was negotiating, asked permission to accompany the general and his staff, which was granted. A tall, hungry-looking gentleman in the faded uniform of a Confederate colonel came into the village and walked straight to the hotel.

He recognized the officers by their uniforms, and with a salute said:

"Good morning, gentlemen."

"Do you live here?" asked General Grant.

"I did live here before the wah. This hotel is mine, and I've come back to see if I can't live here again."

"You have seen some service."

"Yes, General, I commanded a regiment, but it crumbled to pieces; and as I am the only man in it, I thought I would stop off at home."

This man's story, and the reports of Confederate deserters everywhere coming into the Union lines, indicated the disintegrating process that was going on in the ranks of the enemy.

Before reaching Farmville, Grant had been marching with the columns that were pushing along south of Lee's line of retreat; but hoping for a reply to his last letter and wanting to be in easy communication with Lee, he decided that day to march with the portion of the Army of the Potomac pressing Lee's rear guard. Consequently, issuing orders to Sheridan and Ord, he left Farmville, crossed to the north side of the Appomattox and met

General Meade, with whose columns he rode. All day long, as the army advanced, encouraging reports to the effect that Lee's army was going to pieces came in. At night headquarters were established at Curdsville in a large farmhouse a few hundred yards from Meade's camp.

General Grant had been suffering for the last six hours with a severe headache, the natural consequence of fatigue, anxiety, short rations and loss of sleep, which grew worse as night approached. When they went into quarters he bathed his feet in hot water and mustard and applied plasters of mustard to the back of his head and wrists without relief.

The general and his staff occupied a double house for their quarters. Grant lay on the sofa, and Claude and the staff officers bunked on the floor of the room opposite the general's. About midnight all were aroused by Colonel Charles Whittier galloping up to the house with another communication from Lee. This communication still held out a hope of settlement.

"April 8th, 1865.

"General: I received at a late hour your note of to-day. In mine of yesterday I did not intend to propose the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army; but, as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I cannot, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia; but as far as your proposal may affect the Confederate States forces under my command, and tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at 10 A. M. to-morrow on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket lines of the two armies.

"R. E. Lee, General.

"Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant."

General Grant read the letter, commented on it some and lay down again.

Though it was evidently not what he had hoped for, it had much encouragement in it. Since the preceding February, Lee had been general-in-chief of all the Confederate armies, and he was endeavoring to secure a general treaty of peace more than the surrender of his army.

At four o'clock General Grant, who had slept little, rose, and was pacing the yard with his hands to his head. Claude and General Horace Porter had risen and, finding him pacing the yard, the latter asked how he felt.

"I have slept but little," Grant replied, "and I am still suffering the most excruciating pain."

"Well, there is one consolation in all this, General," Porter answered. "I never knew you to be ill that you did not receive some good news. I have become a little superstitious regarding these coincidences, and I should not be surprised if some good fortune overtook you before night." With a smile Grant answered:

"The best thing that can happen me to-day is to get rid of the pain I am suffering."

Shortly after, General Grant went over to Meade's headquarters, where he drank a cup of coffee and declared himself better. He then sat down and dispatched the following letter:

"April 9th, 1865.

"General: Your note of yesterday received. I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace. The meeting proposed for 10 A. M. to-day could lead to no good. I will state, however, that I am equally desirous for peace with yourself, and the whole North entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms, they would hasten the desirable event, save thousands of human lives and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be settled without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself, etc.,

"U. S. Grant, Lieutenant-General.

"General R. E. Lee,"

Some of Grant's staff proposed to him to ride in a covered wagon to keep off the terrible sun, but he declared:

"Cincinnati will do for me," and mounting that famous war horse struck off toward New Store, accompanied by his staff, Claude following them, determined to see what the end of the correspondence between the giants of the North and South would lead to. Every one who knew aught of this conference was filled with nervous eagerness, and even the soldiers in line knew that General Grant and staff so far in advance meant that something more than ordinary was about to transpire.

From New Store they went by the way of a crossroad to the south side of the Appomattox with the intention of moving around to Sheridan's front. They were riding leisurely along a wagon road that ran from Farmville to Appomattox Court House, when some one, glancing to their rear, cried:

"Here comes a messenger!"

It proved to be Lieutenant Charles E. Pease of Meade's staff, who brought the following dispatch from Lee, which read:

"April 9th, 1865.

"General: I received your note this morning on the picket line, whither I had come to meet you and ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposal of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army. I now ask an interview, in accordance with the offer contained in your letter of yesterday for that purpose.

"R. E. Lee, General.

"Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant."

After General Grant had read the communication, Lieutenant Pease said:

"At the request of General Lee, General Meade read this communication, and in consequence of it has granted a short truce."

Without a word General Grant dismounted and, sitting on the grassy bank by the roadside, wrote the following reply to Lee:

"April 9th, 1865.

"General R. E. Lee, Commanding C. S. Army.

"Your note of this date is but this

moment (11:50 A. M.) received, in consequence of my having passed from the Richmond and Lynchburg road to the Farmville and Lynchburg road. I am writing this about four miles west of Walker's church, and will push forward to the front for the purpose of meeting you. Notice sent to me on this road where you wish the interview to take place will meet me.

"T. S. Grant, Lieutenant-General."

Handing this missive to Colonel Babcock, he said:

"Take this to General Lee by the most direct route," and mounting his horse trotted on toward Appomattox Court House. The emotions that welled up in the breasts of those horsemen as they hurried on are beyond description. Could it be possible the great war, which had raged for four years, was to end shortly; were they to see the beginning of the end, the final crushing blow which was to extinguish the life of the Southern Confederacy? On the faces of all was hope, but no sign of exultation over the brave foe they had conquered.

"How is your headache now, General?" asked Porter.

"The pain in my head seemed to leave the moment I got Lee's letter," he answered.

About five or six miles from Appomattox Court House they were met by Colonel Newhall with a copy of the same letter from Lee which had been sent to Sheridan. These letters indicated how closely Lee was pressed, and how anxious he was to avoid further bloodshed, which his judgment told him was useless.

The road was filled with men and animals and wagons, and to avoid these and make the distance shorter Grant's party turned to the right and began to cut across lots. Claude, who was in advance, soon cried:

"Look, General, there are gray coats. We are riding on the enemy's left flank and a short distance farther will take us into their lines."

The horsemen drew rein. At that moment it looked as if some very awk-

ward complications might arise, and General Grant be a prisoner in Lee's lines instead of Lee in his. Without serious discussion or interruption they retraced their steps, and entered the right road. About one o'clock the little village of Appomattox Court House, with its half-dozen houses, came in sight, and they entered its single street. The village was beautifully situated on some rising ground, beyond which the country slopes down into a broad fertile valley. The Confederate army could be plainly seen with trains and artillery covering the low ground, while the Union cavalry, the Fifth Corps and a part of Ord's command, occupied the high ground to the south and west of the Confederates, completely heading them off.

Claude saw a group of officers, some mounted and some on foot, all engaged in earnest consultation. As their party rode toward them, he made out the forms of Sheridan and Ord.

"How are you, Sheridan?" asked Grant, galloping up to the group.

"First rate, thank you; how are you?" cried Sheridan, his manner and voice indicating that he was master of the situation. They had heard a rumor that General Lee was already at Appomattox and General Grant, pointing up the street, asked:

"Is Lee over there?"

"Yes, he is in that brick house," Sheridan answered.

"Well, then, we'll go over," said Grant.

"Am I really to witness the end of this?" Claude asked himself. "Will the blessed angel of peace once more spread her white wings over our broad land?"

The entire party rode over to the McLean house. An orderly, sitting on his horse in front of the brick building, smiled as they came up.

"Who is in the house?" asked Grant.

"General Lee and Colonel Babcock," the orderly answered. "I was stationed here to keep a lookout for General Grant, so as to let him know where General Lee was."

Dismounting, General Grant mounted the steps and entered the house. Babcock opened the door of the room on the left, in which sat General Lee and Colonel Marshall, of his staff. There was a disposition on the part of some of the more curious to crowd in, but General Ord, supposing that General Grant would want the first interview between himself and the great Confederate chief private, said:

"Wait here on the porch."

Then one of the officers, who was a sort of wag, remarked:

"Those two men have been trying to get at each other a long time."

"Yes, but the meeting seems a quiet one after all."

At this moment Colonel Babcock came to the front door and, making a motion with his hat toward the sitting-room, said:

"The General says come in."

Claude had a natural curiosity to see Lee, that military giant, who for four years had been such a dread to the North. When he entered he saw a tall, finely-framed man between fifty-eight and sixty years of age, whose hair and beard were almost white. He was dressed in a neat uniform of gray, and his beautiful sword lay across his knees. His large trooper boots, though comparatively new, were travel stained. A gray felt hat with golden cord and tassel lay on a small stand at his side, and by it a pair of buckskin gauntlets. But the face of that man was a study. It was haggard and wan, the picture of despair. Every hope that great heart had once entertained was gone. His ambition was crushed, the star of his destiny had set forever. He who in military skill had no superior was eclipsed, and why? No doubt Lee on that day realized that he had failed by making the great mistake in the beginning. Had he espoused the cause of the Union, he would have been captor instead of captive. All these tumultuous emotions, like a mighty

whirlwind, were no doubt surging through his breast. His face expressed, in addition, the deepest anxiety. Anxiety not for himself, but for the remnant of his brave army. Would his captors deal mercifully with them, or would there be a disposition to humiliate and tyrannize over them? The war had liberated the slaves of the South, and rumors had already reached the Southern lines that the North, to make their humiliation more complete, contemplated making the ignorant blacks rulers over their former masters. For a moment after the entrance of the officers there was a brief silence, broken by Grant saying:

"I met you once before, General Lee, while we were serving in Mexico, when you came over from General Scott's headquarters to visit General Garland's brigade, to which I then belonged. I have always remembered your appearance, and I think I should have recognized you anywhere."

"Yes, I met you on that occasion," Lee returned, thoughtfully, "and I have often thought of it and tried to recollect how you looked, but I have not been able to recall a single feature." For a few moments the two discussed Mexican reminiscences and then Lee came at once to the subject by saying: "I suppose, General Grant, that the object of our present meeting is fully understood. I asked to see you to ascertain upon what terms you would receive the surrender of my army."

"The terms I propose are those stated substantially in my letter of yesterday; that is, the officers and men surrendered to be paroled and disqualified from taking up arms again until properly exchanged, and all arms, ammunition and supplies to be delivered up as captured property."

Nodding assent, Lee answered:

"Those are about the conditions which I expected would be proposed."